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PRACTICAL NOTES ON WINE

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by E. L. BECKWITH

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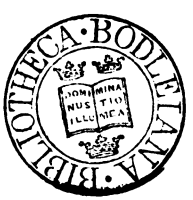
PRACTICAL NOTES

ON WINE.

BY

EDWARD LONSDALE BECKWITH,

ASSOCIATE JUROR AND REPORTER ON WINES AT THE PARIS EXHIBITION, 1867.



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INTRODUCTION.

As the principal merit of a preface is its brevity I hope to satisfy all introductory exigencies by the simple statement that, having been requested by many of my friends to republish, in the form of a pamphlet, the Report on the Wines and other Fermented Liquors of all Nations, which I had the honour to submit to Her Majesty's Commissioners for the Paris Exhibition of 1867, I have availed myself of the opportunity thus afforded me, to offer a few additional remarks on the general topic of Wines, for the consideration of the public at large. These remarks are not made in the spirit of a teacher, but rather in that of an inquirer and searcher after knowledge.

The matters touched upon are such as could scarcely have been brought within the scope of

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a Report; for example, the effect of trade-marks on commerce, the new and old styles of trading in wine, the duties on wine, the best mode of bringing wine within the reach of all classes, and, finally, wine from a physiological or pathological point of view.

Topics such as these, although not, perhaps, susceptible of cognizance in an official statement, are still, I apprehend, of some interest to the public.

EDWARD L. BECKWITH.

79, *Great Tower Street*,
London, 1868.

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PRACTICAL NOTES ON WINE.

CHAPTER I.

On Champagne—Its Characteristics, Bouquet, Effervescence—Ripening Properties—Different Growths—Various Degrees of Sweetness—Relative Merits of Sweet and Dry—Champagne a non-natural Wine—Difference in Manner of Preparation in France and Germany—Champagne destined for England fortified with Brandy—Objections thereto—Our undesirable Reputation—Champagne as a Medicine—Its restorative and retentive Properties—Proper Time of drinking it—Original Cost—Annual Production.

In the cultivation of the vine, and in the production and manufacture of wines, France has long stood pre-eminent. I naturally, then, elect to place the wine growths of the French empire first on my list; nor shall I be accused, it is to be hoped, of undue partiality if, as a subject for

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discussion, I give the *pas* to the universally known and as universally admired champagne.

The distinctive appearance and flavour of this wine are known to all the world. Technically, its characteristics are great "elegance" and fruitiness, without excessive sweetness. Its effervescence should not be too rapid, and should form coruscating bubbles rather than a smooth froth on the surface. The *bouquet* should be suggestive rather of a delicate dryness than of a cloying sweetness. It is erroneous to assume that champagne does not require keeping after being landed in England. It may not be necessary to lay it by for any very considerable period; yet it is certainly susceptible of ripening; and I know few wines that show more improvement after the repose of one or two years. This opinion will, I think, be shared by those who have been fortunate enough to taste lately champagne of the vintage of 1857, landed in England, say, in 1861. It should not be retained in cases, but the bottles should be kept in a cool place, with good ventilation.

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Champagne is known by the names of the houses by whom it is manufactured, rather than by the vineyards where it is grown. There are some "growths," however, which are deservedly famous; such as those of Ay, Verzenay, and Boazy. Of Sillery—the title of another growth, and which is familiar to most English ears—there is little or none genuine. Most of the wine is made from red grapes; but some houses mix the juice of white grapes with the red, with a view of imparting additional flavour to it, white grapes being, as a rule, more aromatic than red.

Before attempting any definition in detail of the peculiar properties of wines as they regard our health, I may observe that a great dissimilarity of opinion prevails on this point. The dicta of the illustrious Liebig on wines are well known, but they have not been left uncontested; and I may mention, as an item of personal experience, that, on consulting Dr. Spies, of Frankfort, on the subject, he informed me, in answer to numerous and carefully prepared questions and suggestions, that after many years' study and experience he

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could only arrive, as a result, at one conclusion—that "all good wine was good, and all bad wine bad." The question obviously remains, What is good, and what is bad?—a query as difficult to resolve as what is wit or what is taste, although any person of cultivated intelligence can pronounce, without much danger of falling into error, as to what is tasteful and what witty.

To return to champagne. The French (who might certainly be assumed the fairest critics of their own staple) and the majority of Continental nations—to which must be added the Americans—prefer a very sweet champagne. In some cases, as much as one-fifth of the whole volume of the wine should be, to suit the Continental taste, simply syrup. In England, on the contrary, champagne containing one-tenth of pure saccharine matter is considered sweet; and many Englishmen would be better pleased if the percentage amounted only to one-twelfth. A moderated sweetness I hold to be more wholesome; and an aversion to excess of saccharine is, I think, indicative of good taste; but it is exceedingly difficult to judge cham-

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pagne by the standard of other wines. It is, to a great extent, "non-natural," and a manufactured and too often sophisticated article. Natural wine should have gone through the entire ordeal of fermentation; but the very fact of the effervescence of champagne proves that the fermentation has still to be completed; and this transition state, although rendering it very agreeable, detracts from its wholesomeness. It may here be remarked that this state of effervescence or incomplete fermentation is created in Germany by a process different from that resorted to in France. In the latter country the wine is bottled *before* the natural fermentation is accomplished, the time for bottling being in the spring following the vintage. In Germany the wine is allowed to ferment to the fullest extent. How much or how little sugar is required to augment the natural sweetness of the wine having been afterwards ascertained, the requisite quantity of syrup is then added to each bottle, and the wine is placed in a heated room and forced into a further fermentation. Which of these two modes should be con-

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sidered the least objectionable I must leave others to determine. It is a very significant fact touching the quality of the syrup introduced into champagne, that the sweetening for wine intended for the English market is prepared with brandy, while that for France and the Continent is made with wine. The former, naturally, is of increased strength; but this increase is at the expense of the bouquet, and is, very probably, injurious to digestion. I have been able to compare, on the spot, at Rheims, the champagnes destined for the different markets. That for England was almost destitute of the subtle and delicate flavour of the French, at the same time displaying an augmentation of coarse and unwholesome strength. I am reluctant to believe that the taste of the classes who in England habitually drink champagne is so vitiated as to induce a preference for a fiery and over-alcoholised product. Nay, I rather incline to think that, were the finer and gentler article more extensively introduced, it would be more largely patronised than the "fortified" wine; but, rightly or wrongly, we have gained a reputa-

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tion for addictedness to heady and potent drinks, and a bad name once acquired is with difficulty lost.

The medicinal qualities of champagne I must leave to be dilated upon by the Faculty. There can be no doubt, however, that its value as a medicine is year after year more largely acknowledged by medical men. It often supersedes—or, at least, supplements—brandy in keeping up the system in cases of extreme exhaustion. It is frequently prescribed in acute sea-sickness; and I can personally vouch for its wonderfully revivifying powers and its faculty of retention on the stomach when no other liquid could be retained. To its general exhilarating properties, to its gentle stimulus, to the innocent cheerfulness it promotes, all civilized mankind can bear testimony; but these remarks apply strictly and solely to good champagne. Than bad champagne nothing can possibly be imagined more injurious to health—it is poison.

Our English habits and customs differ, again, from those of France as to the time and mode of

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drinking champagne. The French usually take it excessively iced, and towards the end of dinner; while in England it is *not* preferably drunk in a state of coolness approaching frigidity, and it is served at the commencement or towards the middle of the repast. I conceive that we are in the right as to the conditions of temperature in which we take champagne, but that we grossly err in imbibing it at the beginning of our meals; for, after partaking of champagne, it becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible, to do justice to more natural wines.

The price of wines in the champagne district, prior to being bottled, and when quite young, varies from 1*s.* 2*d.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* per gallon, and, when bottled, from 1*s.* 5*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per bottle.*

* As the prices I shall name in this work may possibly convey a wrong impression, I think it advisable to explain at the outset, that wine, when sold at these quotations, is still on its first lees, and the cost of package is not included, consequently there exists but little analogy between the cost as it there appears, and that to which we as consumers are accustomed. Nor do I consider it within my province to provoke any such comparison, my duty being, I undertake it, solely to estimate the relative prices of the various exhibiting countries and districts, and for that purpose prime

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The average quantity produced is fifty-two millions of gallons.

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cost is the fairest test. I shall purposely avoid all allusions to quotations of wine when ready for consumption, for unless accompanied by full explanations, I know of no more uncertain and fallible guide than a bare quotation of figures.

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CHAPTER II.

On Burgundy—Principal Vineyards—French love of minute Divisions—Its delicate Constitution—Its undeserved ill Name—Its comparison with Claret—Its Characteristics—Price and annual Production.

ARRIVING next at the consideration of burgundy, it may be useful to remember that the principal vineyards in this splendid district are Romanée Conti, Clos-Vougeot, Richebourg, Chambertin (which is said to have been the favourite wine of Napoleon I.), La Tâche, Corton, Beaune, Volnay, and Pommard. Of white Burgundy wines, we have Mont Rachet (which some critics declare to be the finest of white French wines), Meursault, and, lastly, Chablis, which is grown more to the north, in the department of the Yonne. Nor must I omit to name the excellent Moulin-à-Vent, a very delicate wine from the department of the

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Saône-et-Loire. There are also Mâcon and Beaujolais, both sound and "honest" wines, although without much distinctive character.

To describe all the peculiarities of burgundy would occupy far too much time, and by far exceed the space to which I am confined; nor do I think it would serve any useful purpose to enumerate the multitudinous divisions and subdivisions adopted by the French in their classification of this favourite wine. "Extremes" meet, and we find the passion of the French for infinite division met at the opposite extreme by the well-nigh barbarous simplicity of the Portuguese, who give the generic name of "port" to all their wines. I may remark, however, that, although apparently coarser—that is to say, more robust—than the wines of Bordeaux, the growths of Burgundy are, indeed, very delicate, and will *not* bear sea voyages without suffering deterioration in quality. So, at least, say the French.

Burgundy in former years acquired an ill name, which I cannot think deserved. It has been

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declared heady, fiery, gouty, and apoplectic. Recently, however, wine-drinkers in England seem to have awakened to the fact that burgundy —like salmon at a Greenwich dinner—has been made the scapegoat for many sins, which should not with justice be laid at its door. I am satisfied that, were burgundy taken on its merits and treated with fairness, were it imbibed in moderation *at* dinner, and not *after*, its unpleasant repute as a heater of the blood and a provoker of gout and plethora would very soon disappear. I admit it cannot be taken with so much freedom as claret; but I am of opinion that the public would act wisely in occasionally varying their orders, and in requesting their wine-merchants to alternate the light claret wines with cheap and wholesome burgundy. They will find it "stouter," and possessing a more aromatic flavour. As regards the medium and higher qualities of burgundy, I cannot conscientiously place them in the exalted position which some would confer on them. Without wishing to decry their powerful bouquet, their full, ripe, and rich body, their

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beautiful colour, and their stimulating and invigorating qualities, it is but just to observe they cannot with safety be quaffed from "goblets;" that they are more "serious" than "gay," and "clever" rather than "cheerful" companions.

The lowest price in the Burgundy district for wines at the vintage is about 7*d.* per gallon. The highest qualities sometimes reach 17*s.*

The average annual quantity grown is 75,000,000 of gallons.

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CHAPTER III.

On Claret, or "Vin de Bordeaux"—Its Celebrity—Where grown—Its careful division in Classes or Growths—Various celebrated Vineyards—Absurd Stories about them—Culpable Practices in Bordeaux—Properties and Peculiarities of Claret—Its Colour, Bouquet, Body—Its Hygienic and Scriptural Character—Price and Quantity—Sauterne—Relative Properties of Château-Yquem and Latour-Blanche—Vin de Grave.

CLARET, or, as it is termed on the Continent, "Vin de Bordeaux," is, of all French wines, the best known in England; and its high repute is assuredly deserved. It is grown in the department of the Gironde. The wines are divided very minutely into different classes; and it is a proof of how carefully and faithfully the division was originally made that, although, in some few cases (owing to the care taken by the proprietor in the cultivation of his vines), the boundary lines have

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been partially obliterated, these boundaries are still, in the majority of instances, perfectly well defined and easy of recognition. It is scarcely necessary to give the names of all the classed Bordeaux wines. There are many very excellent growths which are not even classed at all; but I may mention cursorily such wines of the first class as Château-Margaux, Château-Lafite (and not Lafitte, as it is usually spelt), Château-Latour, and Haut-Brion; of the second class, Mouton, Leoville, Rausan, La Rose, and Cos d'Estournel; of the third class, Giscours, Lagrange, Langoa, Boyd-Cantenac; of the fourth class, St. Pierre, Duluc, Duhard; of the fifth class, Grand-Puy, Cantemerle, Cos Labory, and Batailley.

It is not so very long since the difficulty in obtaining Château-Margaux and Château-Lafite was attributed to the so-called fact of the produce of the vines being sold many years in advance to various European potentates. The Emperor of the French, the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, the Pope, &c., were all represented as "accapareurs" of high-class clarets. Analogous stories are related

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with reference to Havannah cigars; but, as regards the wine trade, I believe all these "forestalling" tales to be fables. Any person, however private or obscure he may be, can, if he have a sufficient command of money, buy up every year, during the vintage, as much first-class claret as he desires. That it may not be very easy to obtain, at a later period, a sufficient quantity of the *first growths* in a *genuine state*, I readily admit; and, without wishing to assert anything which might cause offence to the merchant princes of Bordeaux, it is notorious that there is openly sold every year at least one hundred times as much Château-Lafite and Château-Margaux as is actually produced. I believe this to be much more the result of vicious habit than of a desire to defraud; yet very many highly respectable firms, whose integrity is otherwise unimpeachable, and who would scorn to descend to the small chicaneries of trade, do not scruple to sell as Château-Lafite and Château-Margaux wines which they know perfectly well do not proceed from those vineyards. They may plead that in this they are only following imme-

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morial custom; but the custom is, I think, extremely reprehensible, and should be abandoned. Far better would it be if the wine-merchants of Bordeaux, following the example of their brethren at Oporto and Cadiz, completely sank the individuality of the vineyards, and trusted to the good repute, for honesty and rectitude of purpose, of their own names. The public, who are now suffered to wander in a very labyrinth of deceit, would very soon discover and fix upon for patronage the best shippers, whose names would become "household words." Nor would this change of system fail to redound to the advantage of the shipper himself. He would be unfettered in his choice of growths. He would have to look only to quality; he could buy cheaper, and he could even profitably sell, at a much lower rate, wines of a much better quality than are now in the market. As matters are managed at present, the product of some vineyards is just as absurdly over-estimated as that of others is unjustly under-valued.

The properties and peculiarities of claret are too numerous and too elaborate to be particularised in

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a report of which brevity is an essential. Those who have lately tasted a fine '48 need no other guide or illustration as to what is almost "perfect" in wine. Those who are not connoisseurs in claret would not easily be enabled, from any description, to realise an idea of its beauties. Its colour, for instance, is difficult (even in these days of new hues) of definition. It is, in fact, "claret-colour," and nothing else. To define an odour is a task equally, if not more onerous, and I can think of nothing closer to convey a notion of the bouquet of claret than a combination of raspberries and violets. The "body is round," fruity, and soft as satin; and all the components are so happily blended into a homogeneous whole, that, during the "degustation" of good claret, all the senses seem to be simultaneously gratified. It is not, however, merely as a sybaritic luxury that I would wish claret to be known. Higher praise may be accorded to it as one of the most refreshing, the most cooling, and the most invigorating of beverages, easy of digestion, and even assisting that process; a mildly stimulating and inebriating

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drink, in every way fulfilling its Scriptural character as a "wine that maketh glad the heart of man."

Commencing at as low a price as 1*s*. per gallon, the finest growths, in their crude state, may rule as high as 25*s*.

Eighty-five millions of gallons are grown in this district, which also includes the white wines of Sauterne. Château-Yquem is pre-eminently the best of these, and is noticeable in good years for its exquisitely dulcet and delicate flavour. Some of the other growths, such as Latour, Blanche, are, to my taste, almost as excellent, and are even more wholesome and better suited to English tastes. They are drier and have equal flavour and body. The lighter wines of the Grave district are very "elegant," but are scarcely stout enough to become general favourites in England.

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CHAPTER IV.

Vins d'Est—Districts included under this Head—Qualities not attractive—Straw Wine—Why so called—Price and annual Production—Vins du Midi—Extent of Area—Manufacture of Imitation Wines—Roussillon a Wine suitable for England—Character of Wines produced in the Hérault—Vins de Liqueur—Price and annual Production—Vins de Table—Why so designated—Ermitage or Hermitage—Origin of the Name—Wines of the Rhône—Large annual Production—Moderate Prices—The Importance of France as a Wine-growing Country—Total Quantity Produced.

Vins d'Est.—UNDER this head I include all the wines grown in the department of the Haut-Rhin, and along the eastern boundaries of France to the department of the Var. There are no growths bearing any particular names, nor do I find any of very special excellence. My experience of them at Strasbourg and elsewhere is, that they are "hungry," thin, and ungenerous wines. Those of the Jura possess considerable bouquet, not

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unlike that of fine Manzanilla, but their body is poor. I think, however, that were greater care bestowed upon them, some of the vins d'Est might turn out good wines. I have been shown some of the year 1774, and some of 1811, both still quite sound.

The lowest price is about 8*d.* per gallon, and the highest, not including the "straw" wine, is about 3*s.*

In these districts there is grown a considerable quantity of vin de paille, or "straw" wine. As it must be considered strictly as a vin de liqueur or dessert wine, I should scarcely deem it worthy of mention here, but for the peculiar mode of its manufacture. The grapes are allowed to remain on the vines a long time after they are ripe. They are then gathered and exposed for a certain period on straw, whence the name of the wine, until almost dry. They are then pressed and fermented in the ordinary manner; but, in consequence of their long exposure, they are, of course, very sweet, and will keep many years. Our home-made raisin wine is not unlike the vin de paille.

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The quantity produced in this district is one hundred and twenty-seven million gallons.

The Vins du Midi embrace the wines grown in all the districts from the department of the Gard to that of the Eastern Pyrenees.

It is especially in this region that the "manufacture" and "imitation" of other wines are carried on. A very large export business is done, at Cette, in Roussillon and other growths. The English consumer is not allowed to taste them in their pure and natural state; but they are first highly alcoholised, and then sent out under the spurious names of "French" port and sherry. Thus, injustice is done both to the Roussillon wines themselves and to those which they profess to imitate. The excuse urged for loading them with alcohol is that, unless brandy be added to them, they will not bear the sea voyage; but as large quantities of Roussillon are exported in a perfectly natural state to the North of Europe, I hold that, with proper care in the earlier stages of preparation, this wine might be brought to England without any perceptible injury being

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inflicted upon it. Nor can I doubt that, were such an exportation of "undoctored" Roussillon found practicable, a very wide and profitable field of enterprise would be opened to the English wine-merchant. Luscious, powerful, and of a fine colour, the wines of the Hérault, of St.-Georges, of Montpellier, &c., are eminently suitable to our moist climate, and, when mingled with water, they form a smooth, sweet, and pleasant drink.

In this division, too, are manufactured the major part of the vins de liqueur of France. Many of them are nearly, if not quite, as good as the absurdly over-estimated "Imperial" Tokay, but their prices are very much lower.

The quantity of Vins du Midi produced is very considerable—nearly one hundred and twenty-six millions of gallons.

The price begins as low as 6*d.* per gallon.

Vins de Table.—These embrace the produce of the Rhône, Gers, Drôme, Loire, Seine-et-Oise, &c.

I employ the generic term of "Vins de Table," not as suggestive of any marked inferiority in these wines, but simply as contradistinctive to the Vins

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de Liqueur or dessert wines. And, under this name of "Vins de Table," the remaining wines of France may be fairly embodied.

Among them are growths of great excellence. Some, indeed, might be classed as "very fine," including, as they do, the well-known Ermitage or Hermitage, as it is called in England. This vineyard is situated near Tain, and, I infer, derives its name from the estate on which it is grown having been first cultivated by the monks. Many vineyards throughout Europe owe their origin to a similar cause; but there is no need to jump at the conclusion that the monks of old were overweeningly attached to the good things of this life. The real reason may have been that the earliest monks were hermits and anchorites, and that their cells were generally built in sterile and rocky places where little could grow, and certainly nothing vegetable could flourish save the vine. White and red Hermitage are both admirable wines. Crose has also many good qualities; and, in good seasons, there are few wines more delicious than Côte-Rôtie. I may also

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mention the wine called Château Neuf du Pape, the various growths near Nismes and St. Péray. Many of these are eminently drinkable, although they rarely possess any extraordinary fragrance of bouquet. They are, however, extremely enjoyable and health-giving.

The quantity of vins de table produced is enormous. The average may be set down at three hundred and sixty-five millions of gallons. The price varies from 5*d*. to 8*s*. per gallon.

The importance, nay the supremacy, of France, as a wine-growing country, may be estimated when we arrive at the aggregate of all the average quantities made. It amounts to no less than eight hundred and thirty-one millions of gallons, exclusive of one hundred and sixty-five millions of gallons annually distilled into brandy.

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CHAPTER V.

On German Wines—Limited Area of Production—Their comparison with other Wines—The Wine which deserves the highest Reward—Why Rhine and Moselle Wines are more heating than French—Their Durability—A Hint to Purchasers of Johannesberg—Price and annual Produce.

ADMITTING that there cannot possibly be any question as to the good qualities of the wines of this country, especially as regards its higher growths, I do not attribute quite the same importance to German wines as to those of certain other wine-producing districts, for the reason that no appreciable addition is likely to be made to its productive powers; and, again, from the fact that the smaller and cheaper wines of Germany are neither so suitable, so cheap, nor so good as those with which other countries supply us. Rhine wines, however, merit more than a mere passing

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remark, on account of the great skill and industry displayed in their production, and the high state of perfection to which the Germans have brought their vineyards. I have no hesitation in stating, as my deliberate opinion, that were one medal only to be awarded as a recompense to the exhibitor of the finest possible wine, illustrative of what nature, aided by industry and improved by science, can effect, that medal should at once be awarded to Johannesberger. It is the Château-Margaux of the Rhine, as the Steinberg is its Lafite. The best of the Rhine wines are all white. There is a red species, called Assmannshausen; but I have not met with any very remarkable specimens of it. The only red wine which I deem deserving of high commendation is the old Steinwein, grown near Würzberg; and this is excellent, both in body and flavour.

That the wines of the Rhine and the Moselle are more heating than those of France, is indubitable. The fact is due, I apprehend, to the presence of more aromatic properties in the former than in the latter.

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The capacity for durability of Rhine wines is astonishing. I tasted some last year, still in the cask, made in the year 1616, and which was even then perfectly sound.

It may not be out of place to warn purchasers who pay a very high price for Johannesberg that there is a marked difference between the qualities; Johannesberg Schloss is one wine, Johannesberg district is another. Still, although the wine grown at the Castle is incomparably the finest, and, in good years, exquisitely delicious, even its produce is occasionally poor. The same remark applies to Margaux clarets; those of the Château-Margaux being of the very highest class, while the district Margaux—an area of much wider extent—produces both good and bad wines.

About forty-five millions of gallons are annually produced in the Zollverein, and the price varies between 2*s*. and 50*s*. per gallon.

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CHAPTER VI.

Austrian and Hungarian Wines—Their Qualities—Tokay an overrated Wine—Immense Production—Price—Deceptions practised on English Consumers.

I HAVE much gratification in drawing the attention of my countrymen to the wines of the Austrian Empire, not only on account of their quality—in which, albeit excellent, there is still much room for improvement—but because I think that, for our own sakes, as well as for reasons of international polity, we should do our best to welcome and encourage all *new* producers of wine. I use "new" in a relative sense. The vineyards of Austria may be as ancient as any in Europe, but it has only been within a very recent period that these wines—with the exception of tokay, which is a mere exotic luxury—have become known in England.

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The peculiarity of Austrian wines consists—not as in France, where there are scarcely any two growths alike—in their wide-spread and almost unvarying similarity—a similarity so monotonous that at last it nauseates. As yet the cultivation of the vine in Austria, if such a figure of speech be permissible, is a pure democracy. There are no Imperial or Royal wines; for here, as I have already hinted, I cannot accord sovereign rights to tokay. It is simply a *vin de dessert*, or to be taken with cake at a morning call.

The best Austrian white wine is, in my opinion, that grown at Gumpoldskirchen, between Vienna and the village of Baden-bei-Wien; and the red wines of Vöslau are certainly equal, if not superior, to any other red wines which Austria proper can produce; whilst Hungary is best represented by the rich and high-flavoured wine of Ofen (Buda).

The quantity annually grown, including the product of the kingdom of Hungary, is five hundred millions of gallons. The price varies from 6*d*. to 2*s*. 6*d*. per gallon.

I should scarcely be fulfilling my duty while

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commenting on the wines of the Austrian Empire were I not to enter a protest against the inordinately high prices demanded in some cases for Hungarian wines in England. High-sounding titles are given to wines whose original producers were entirely ignorant of their illustrious paternity. Such a wine is "Cabinet;" such another is "Own Growth;" and, on the principle of "fine feathers" making "fine birds," a correspondingly high price is asked. I can only say that no such dignified growths are known in the country where they are said to be grown. The price of wine in Hungary is, throughout, exceedingly moderate; and it is really an insult to the intelligence of the English people thus to trifle with them. There is little to wonder at, seeing with what facility we are duped, in our character for good taste being held so cheap by foreign nations.

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CHAPTER VII.

Italian Wines—The favourable Position of Italy for Wine-growing — Its ancient Pre-eminence — How Wine is now produced—Mode of Culture and Training of the Vines—Various Growths — Fiscal Difficulties — Sicilian Wines — Marsala, as drunk in Italy and England.

THE Italian peninsula should, of all European countries, from its admirable position and unequalled conditions of climate, be the most favourable to the cultivation of the vine, and Italy should have gained long since, as a wine-growing country, a renown as permanent and as profitable as that enjoyed by France. I need scarcely say that I am referring in this regard strictly to modern times, for, were even the most transient survey taken of the fascinating field of antiquity, we should see that the Campanian, the Umbrian, and the Tuscan wines were deservedly famous centuries before the

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vineyards of Gaul were even heard of; and that they retained their celebrity for a lengthy period, during which, although the Gallic wines were known, they were despised as poor and spiritless.

The wines of modern Italy are said to be deficient in "staying" qualities, and this has been dwelt upon as an argument for the frequent dissidence of theory with fact. I would submit, however, that the criticisms passed on modern Italian wines might be modified did we more frequently take into consideration the carelessness, and sometimes almost total neglect, in which the vines are reared. Indeed, the sight of an Italian vineyard and an Italian vintage may awaken a sensation of astonishment that even such good wine as is really made should come out of such a place and under such difficulties. The vines are generally planted on level plains, and are intermingled with other and the most strangely assorted vegetable produce, whereby they are deprived of their full sustenance. They are trained from tree to tree in wreaths, most picturesque to look upon, and thus obtain only the downward

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rays of the sun, losing those which, striking the earth, are refracted upwards—a double advantage which is secured to low-trained vines planted on slopes and terraces. In fine, they never become so well or so evenly ripened as the wines of France and Germany.

Those who are acquainted with the Ghem and Buanza wines of Lombardy; with the Broglio, the Chianti, and the Monte-pulciano of Tuscany; with the Capri of Naples and the Barolo of Piedmont, will gladly testify to the excellence of these and many other Italian growths, possessing, as they do, good colour, purity, flavour, and sufficient fruitiness and body. Could the Italian agriculturist only be encouraged — in lieu of being discouraged, as he now is, by ruinous fiscal imposts —to grow good instead of inferior wines, the wine product of Italy would, I have not the slightest doubt, be gladly welcomed and highly esteemed in England. I have not relied solely on my own personal experience and observation in adducing this opinion, and I am glad to strengthen it with the authority of the Marchese General Emile

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Bertone di Sambuy, president of the Agricultural Association of Turin, by whom I am assured that Italian wines could easily be made to bear transport by sea without the use of alcohol; and he is willing, at any time, to submit to our Board of Trade two samples of every kind of Italian wine so prepared.

In the Italian wines are included those of Sicily; and I may remark, *en passant*, that the wine drunk in Italy under the name of marsala differs very widely, both as to strength and flavour, from that to which we have been accustomed in England.

I am unable to furnish any definite information as to the annual yield of the Italian vineyards, or the price of wines. The consolidation of the kingdom of Italy has been of too recent a date, for this department of agricultural statistics to be accurately edited. The prices, I may nevertheless observe, rule very low, and the quantity is capable of being increased to an indefinite extent.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Wines of Spain—All Spanish Wine not Sherry—The Sherry District—Mode of defining various Wines—Desirability of calling the Wine after the Name of its proper District—Enormous Yield of Wine—Its astonishing Cheapness—Characteristics of Sherry.

THOSE who have supposed that in drinking sherry they had become conversant with the wines of Spain, must be prepared for a complete revolution in their preconceived ideas when they visit the Exhibition of 1867; for by far the greater number of wine exhibitors come from parts of the peninsula very remote indeed from the sherry or Xeres districts. The region in which sherry, properly so called, is produced, is situated not far from the port of Cadiz, and is about twelves miles square; but there can be no doubt that vast quantities of wines from other districts are brought in for the

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purpose of mixing with the genuine product, the normal price of the latter being very much in advance of that of the ordinary wines.

Here, as in Champagne, the wine is known by the name of the shippers, and not by that of the vineyard. This plan I have already stated to be the most beneficial to the consumer; for, independently of the deservedly high character of the merchants of Cadiz and Puerta Santa Maria, their brands bear so high and almost so historical a value that they dare not attach them to an inferior article, and they thus hold themselves morally responsible for every cask of wine that leaves their warehouses. It is to be regretted, however, for the sake of the shippers themselves, that they should indifferently denominate all the white wines of Spain as "sherry," for it cannot be doubted that when the facilities of communication increase, and when locomotion is more general in Spain—as it now promises every day to become—we shall begin eagerly to seek not only the wines of Andalusia, but those of Valentia and Granada to the south, and of Catalonia and the Castiles to

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the north. There is not the slightest reason why as many varieties of Spanish, as of French or Italian, wines should not be brought to light; but, at present, the resources of the Spanish vineyards are "things of Spain," of an equally cloudy nature to most things relating to this "terra incognita" of European civilization. That French wines should be broadly divided into burgundies and clarets, although there may be 200 varieties of vin de Bourgogne, and as many, or more, of vin de Bordeaux, is perfectly feasible. The difference between them is as marked as that which exists between satin and velvet; but to call by one invariable title the entire produce of an entire country of vast extent, and whose climate varies, according to its conformation, from Siberian asperity to African sultriness, is most unjust, and even more provocative of confusion than that practice, which I have already reprehended, of subdividing the growths of a district into well-nigh infinitesimal classes.

The quantities of wine shipped from Cadiz can easily be ascertained by reference to the Board of

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Trade returns; but we are utterly without information as to the aggregate yield of the Spanish vineyards. This yield is, however, known to be enormous; and the bounty of nature in this respect is the more remarkable when we bear in mind the extreme temperance of the Spanish people, who, except the lower classes in a few seaports, are all but as abstemious as Mohammedans. The abundance of the *vino del païs*, or common wine of the country, may be judged from the fact that (casks and cooperage being expensive), when new wine is required to be put into the cask, that of the preceding year is occasionally poured down the gutters of a town, and that—notably at Val de Peñas—common wine is sometimes used instead of water for mixing with mortar.

It is far from easy to describe all the characteristics of sherry, so much depends upon taste and fancy, and in the fact of the shippers keeping "soleras," or reserved wines, by an admixture of which they can produce almost every variety of colour and flavour. Without setting up an arbi-

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trary standard, which I consider to be all but impossible, I will throw out, however, as a general hint, that sherry should be soft, without being sweet; fruity to the taste while in the mouth, but leaving the palate quite clean; that it should be invigorating, but not heating; and that, as regards hue, it should be of a decided straw colour. If it possesses these qualities, the epicure may rest fairly contented; albeit, in some few and minor particularities, such, for instance, as gradation of tint, the opinions of the very best judges may differ.

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CHAPTER IX.

Wines of Portugal—Port a constant Theme for Controversy—Date and Origin of its Introduction—Falling off in Consumption—Mr. Consul Crawfurd and the late Baron Forrester—Where Port, properly so called, is grown—Other Wines of Portugal—Characteristics of Port.

I APPROACH the wines of Portugal, although I must necessarily be very brief in my notice of them, with considerable reluctance; for, ever since I have heard or known anything of port wine, it has formed a theme for controversy. It seems to be impossible to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion whether this notable and potent wine is a friend or foe to the human frame. Disputants are as unable to agree as to the desirability of drinking it as they are as to whether it should be sweet or dry, and among merchants themselves the argu-

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ment has run high, and seems as far as ever from a definitive solution. The trade in port wine commenced at the end of the seventeenth century, in a spirit of unfairness towards France, whose manufactures, for political reasons, it was thought desirable to discourage. Everyone has heard of the "Methuen" treaty, which, early in the eighteenth century, still further widened the commercial breach between England and France, pledging us, as it did, to an almost exclusive consumption of port wine; Portugal, on her side, agreeing to admit our woollen goods at reduced duties. The contest between port and claret thus commenced has continued ever since, although of late years the status of the combatants has been equalised by the reduction of duties on French wines.

Within the last few years the use of port has been, to a great extent, superseded by sherry, and at present it is suffering every day fiercer and fiercer opposition on the part of the wines of France; indeed, unless the shippers consent to make very radical alterations in their mode of

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preparation, port will soon sink to the third rank in the hierarchy of wines.

It is scarcely, perhaps, my province, in such a work as the present, to enter into any discussion; but I think that I should, in justice, refer to the last Report of Mr. Consul Crawfurd, and notice that portion in which he states that the wines of France are always mixed with spirit prior to exportation. This (the "French port" always excepted) is not the case. Mr. Crawfurd deduces from the supposed fact an apology for the employment of alcohol in port, adding that, owing to the writings of the late Baron Forrester, the consumption of port wine in England has not progressed as other wines have done.

These are the Baron's propositions, as stated by Mr. Crawfurd:—

"1st. That port wine can be *made* without spirit, because French wine can be so made.

"2nd. That the wine is shipped to England in an adulterated state."

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Propositions with which, I should have thought, most of those who are acquainted with the subject would agree.

I believe I am right in stating that it was never contemplated, by the late Baron Forrester, that port should not have a slight quantity of alcohol added to it, *after* making, which is very different from the practice of impregnating the wine with alcohol *during the process* of *making;* and I cannot help thinking that, had the Baron's suggestions been acted upon, we should be enabled to take our port in comfort and safety, and with something like pride. As it is, the fact that we have habitually drunk, or that we drink, this potent wine has become almost a reproach, and the Englishman's fondness for port has made him a laughing-stock in the eyes of foreigners.

The wine known as port should be grown in the Alto Douro, but a vast quantity of other wines are brought in to be blended with it. In good years as much as 70,000 pipes have been made in the Douro district alone. The remarks on which I ventured in regard to Spain will also

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apply to Portugal, as to the error committed by the shippers in not exporting a variety of wines in lieu of one invariable and monotonous sort. Englishmen should have an opportunity to taste the wines of Estremadura, of Beira, and of Minho, which last are said not to be inferior to any grown in the Peninsula. The consumer's taste would be pleased; Portugal might be virtually compensated for the fading away of her unfair monopoly; and the shipper would be benefited, for he would no longer be the bond-servant of the Alto Douro, and the slave of port and nothing but port, but would be enabled to go further a-field and buy his wines cheaper.

With regard to the characteristics of port, it may be stated that the presence of a modified "fruitiness" in it is an essential, but that it should *never* be sweet. Rich colour, firmness, homogeneousness, and a tendency to dryness without astringency, will not fail to be among the qualities of good port wine. When, in addition to these, it has attained a ripe age, in bottle, and has acquired some bouquet, it is

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undeniably, whatever may be urged to the contrary, a noble and generous beverage, and, so long as Englishmen are Englishmen, will never fail to find admirers.

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CHAPTER X.

The Paris Exhibition—A run round the outer Circle, commencing at Porte Rapp in the French Department, and terminating with the British; Embracing the respective Displays of Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Russia, Italy, Turkey, Austria, Hungary, America, Brazil, South America, British Colonies, and Australia, with various Notes and Reflections on their Productions.

THE display of French wines commences in the immediate vicinity of the Porte Rapp, and, as might be expected, is of great extent and most neatly and elegantly arranged. But there is absolutely no novelty. The old, well-known *premiers crûs*, or first growths, retain their ancient and honoured places at the head of French wines. I was disappointed to find that, with one or two exceptions, none of the great champagne houses have exhibited. I was informed that the fact of their reputation having been made, was the reason for their so abstaining from participation in the

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world's congress; but I trust that my informant was in error. If the mere fact of having attained celebrity were, as a rule, to deter manufacturers from displaying their products, a long farewell must be bidden to universal exhibitions. Apart from the immediate commercial advantages derived from the publicity given to his wines, it should be the pride of the manufacturer to show to the utmost what his country can produce; and there is, moreover, much to be taught and much to be learned in all exhibitions, which can scarcely fail to be mutually beneficial, both to exhibitors and to the community at large.

The display of Bordeaux wines is admirably arranged, being confined to the growth of 1864—a year that was fairly favourable to all districts. I was glad also to renew my acquaintance with some of the red wines of Lorraine, which I had tasted at Nancy. They are smooth, pleasant, and well flavoured, and very moderate in price. A very agreeable, sparkling wine, light and pure, and also made near Nancy, was exhibited; it is called *le vin de la Côte des Chanoines.*

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Some of the brandies were very good, especially those of 1827 and 1832, shown by Bertandau, of Juillac-le-Coq, near Cognac. These were the best specimens I ever tasted.

The iron bins and baskets employed in cellarage have long been in use in England. The only appreciable advance made in the manufacture of French wine is the subjection of wine intended for exportation to 60 deg. centigrade of heat. The exposure only continues for a few minutes, but the heat effectually destroys all germs of further fermentation, without, it is said, injuring the wine.

BELGIAN BEER.

Belgium exhibits no wine; but has a very fair show of beers, liqueurs, and spirits. The last named are very well made; but it is difficult to speak favourably of the beers.

GERMANY.

Under this head I include Prussia and all the smaller States, as some of the latter have little or nothing to show in the shape of wine. All the

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German products are arranged with characteristic neatness of design. Bavaria, of course, shows her renowned beer, and carries off a gold medal; and the Rhine and Moselle wines, although not represented by the houses best known in England, well sustain their high reputation. The spirits made at Berlin can scarcely be praised too highly for their "cleanliness" and cheapness.

Austria, with which is included the kingdom of Hungary, makes a very extensive, and, on the whole, a very satisfactory show. In the centre of the former is a cask of enormous dimensions, exhibited by a merchant who is supposed to sell Hungarian wines. It is doubtful whether this is to be taken as an indication of the extremely friendly relations which now happily reign between Austria and Hungary; but the Magyar cask completely casts into the shade the modest but excellent wines of Vöslau close by, which seem quite overpowered by their gigantic neighbour.

I have already pointed out how undesirable it is for the younger wine countries, in their anxiety to introduce their wines to the English market, to

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borrow the names (and some are said to borrow the product likewise) of older English favourites. It may be in charity supposed that such a system has been adopted with a view to spare the English ear from hearing, and the English mouth from pronouncing, some extraordinary names borne by the less-known wines, and of which I may take Tschwrtschenthaler as a sufficient specimen.

I was very pleased with some samples of wine from Marburg. These were fruity, and had good body. The red wines of Vöslau (exhibited by Mr. Schlumberger) are also worthy of most favourable notice.

Those who know how admirably the business of the Messrs. Iälics, of Pesth, is conducted, how magnificent is their establishment, and how rapid have been their advances in the development of the wine manufacture, will be gratified to learn that they have again been "honourably distinguished."

As a matter of course, a prize for beer is likewise carried off by Vienna—a prize obviously merited by the exquisite brewing of their favourite

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German beverage. The Viennese beer may fairly be styled the Montilla of malt and hops. The worthy monks of Klosteneuberg will also rejoice to hear that their exertions have met with a fitting reward, and they may add the Paris Exhibition gold medal to the sumptuous collection of jewels in their treasure-chamber.

SWITZERLAND.

Generally speaking, the wine grown in the Helvetic Confederation is very ordinary. Of the tolerable sorts I may mention that from Yvorne, situated to the north-east of the Lake of Geneva, and the sparkling Neufchâtel. As a rule, the Swiss, as wine-growers, must be admired more for the industry and perseverance they have shown than for any great result they have attained.

SPAIN.

Spain exhibits, in a separate building in the Park of the Champ-de-Mars, her cereals, her wine, her oil, and her tobaccos. The entire collection is splendid.

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In wines none of the great Cadiz houses exhibit; and, although I made three distinct engagements to examine and report on any wines which might be unknown in the English market, not one of these appointments was kept. "To-morrow" (the historical *mañana* of Spain) was always suggested as the time when I really should see them. I did happen to taste, by accident, some wines from Malaga and Catalonia. They appeared to be quite as alcoholic as any to which we have been accustomed in England, and were widely different from that which the reports of travellers had led me to expect.

Spain carries off eight gold medals as her share of prizes.

PORTUGAL.

Portugal makes but a very small show, and scarcely any attempt at display, or what the French term "installation," is essayed. I tasted one sample of port, fully fermented, but it was very dry and rough. Specimens of bucellas were, however, shown me, all which, I was assured, were

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wholly free from brandy, and the degustation confirmed the statement. It was a "pretty," pleasant, dryish wine, with a slightly bitter taste, but very agreeable to the palate. Surely, if wines of this nature can be made as an exception, they could equally well be made as a rule. This bucellas was five years old, and perfectly firm and sound. The ports shown by Rebello and Feuerheerd were also very good. They are almost the only Portuguese shippers who exhibit.

GREECE.

I was considerably disappointed in the examination of the wines of Greece. After the glowing accounts I had lately heard of them, I was scarcely prepared to find the wine called Santorin so very light in body though of good bouquet, while the wine of Patras was very mediocre indeed, and that of Athens decidedly bad. I was informed that the Greeks were improving steadily in the manufacture of wines, and that, although they already produce from sixty to seventy millions of gallons annually, this yield might soon be very considerably increased.

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RUSSIA.

Russia makes but a small display, but she has contrived to render it very complete. She exhibits wine, both dry and for dessert, together with beer and spirits; and her exhibition of sweetmeats is really quite captivating. The only descriptions of wines, however, grown on Russian soil, possessing any interest to the English consumer, are the white and red varieties from the Crimea, grown by Prince Woronzoff. The former are clean and dry, with a slight muscatel flavour and good body; the latter resembles very old port, bereft, however, of its strength. I should esteem these wines to be very suitable to our climate. I could not learn the precise quantities produced; but I am told the yield is plentiful.

ITALIAN WINES.

Notwithstanding an application on my part for information in this department, more than seven weeks after the opening of the Exposition the arrangements of the Italian section were still so far incomplete as to render it impossible for me

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to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion on the exhibition of Italian wines, as a whole. The number of exhibitors is very large, and the wines shown are sufficiently varied; but, from all I could gather from extraneous sources, the samples exhibited fall very short of doing justice to the growths they are assumed to represent. Italy, even so far as the knowledge of her resources is concerned, is still in an undeveloped condition.

TURKISH WINES.

In Turkey, I found the *vins de liqueur* exhibited very good indeed, and very moderate in price. They are mainly fabricated in the island of Cyprus. The dry wines, or *vins de table*, grown in the Ottoman possessions—if the samples tasted are to be accepted as evidence of their quality—would seem fairly to justify the prohibition from wine imposed by Mohammed on his followers. They are decidedly to be avoided, both by Frank and Moslem. One red wine appeared to have been mixed with liquorice; and a white specimen I tasted would scarcely have possessed any body or

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texture at all had it not been for some substance, resembling gum (possibly, resin), suspended in it, and the presence of which was anything but agreeable to the palate.

AMERICAN WINES.

In the United States of America the show of wines is naturally very small; but I need only, in explanation, quote the terse remark of one of the United States Commissioners:—"We do not exhibit for the sake of selling, but with the object of learning." Such being obviously the case, I shall be absolved from all imputations of unfriendliness in noticing the extreme sparseness of the wine product of North America. That the well-known "catawba," about which so much has been said, sung, and written, is a very "nice" wine few can deny. The Catawba grape has a defined flavour, which to many is delicious; but I do not think that full justice is done to the grape in its treatment under manufacture. The sparkling catawba has too much *mousse*, or frothiness, in lieu of coruscating effervescence about it. It is

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"full sweet," and shows some slight tendency to acidity: whilst dry catawba, although showing good bouquet, is deficient in the firmness and "roundness" inseparable from well-managed wines. In beers the great American republic is doing very well indeed. It is unfortunate that the bitter ales manufactured by Messrs. Smith and Co., of New York, were lost during their voyage across the Atlantic; but their porters and strong ales can be tasted, in excellent condition, at the adjacent American restaurant, where also the "cocktails," "eye openers," "phlegm cutters," and other curiosities of the American bar can be drunk in perfection.

BRAZILIAN WINES.

From the empire of Brazil but very little wine has hitherto come; but the cultivation of the vine, I am informed, is satisfactorily progressing. Some samples are exhibited made from green and ripe grapes. The former appeared very inferior, and I could discover little of the natural flavour of the grape in the latter, which rather resembled

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English "home-made" wine. Some "straw wine" from Rio de Janeiro, and another sample of the same kind from St. Paulo, evinced much higher qualities.

SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS.

In the South American Republics the only notable wine I found, and this was exceptionally deserving of notice, was a white wine from Lima, in Peru, called moquequa. It was soft, dry, and clean, but at present the annual growth does not exceed 40,000 gallons. This product, I am assured, is susceptible of a large increase. The price of moquequa is very moderate.

BRITISH COLONIES.

As regards the colonial possessions of Great Britain, it should be a subject of gratification to all to find that the Cape of Good Hope has sent to the Paris Exhibition wine of such excellent quality as to elicit encomia even from the French jurors, usually so difficult to please in matters of taste. "Cape" wine has for a very long time

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been exposed to ridicule and detraction. "South African" sherries have been made the text of innumerable jests, now worn threadbare, and on the principle of "giving a dog a bad name" the stigma of opprobrium has been affixed to the vineyards of the Cape Colony, and the English public have grown perfectly ashamed of admitting that they could drink such a thing as Cape wine. The present display goes far to wipe out this foul blot on the South African scutcheon, and justifies us in the aspiration, that in the future the colony will be true to its name, and in the production of wines will be one of "Good Hope" indeed.

AUSTRALIA.

Australia, also, shows considerable improvement in her wines; but owing to the heavy expense of freight, and the demand which exists in the country itself, many years must elapse before England can look for any extended supply from this quarter. Such indications of improvement as are manifest in the wine growths of the Australian colonies should, nevertheless, be cordially welcomed.

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GREAT BRITAIN.

I finally approach the fermented liquors of Great Britain; and I must premise that we make no very prominent display in the Champ-de-Mars. Were a stranger indeed to argue solely from the fact of our meagre exhibit of those products, he might either laud us enthusiastically for our extreme temperance, or, not being of the total abstinence persuasion, he might censure us for the little care we bestowed upon the liquid creature comforts of life. That which we have shown in the way of alcoholic beverages in the Exposition Universelle cannot be regarded as evidence, either of the extent of our productions, or the proportion of our trade. Nineteen exhibitors only represent the whole of Great Britain in the departments of brewing, distilling, vinegar and cider making.

Porter, Ale, Cider, Perry, Vinegar.—Taking these seriatim, I find that porter has been almost entirely neglected. None of the London brewers exhibit their manufactures in this article; but we have still no cause to be ashamed of the display made of our national beverage, beer. Never,

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perhaps, was the pale or bitter ale of Burton-on-Trent shown in finer condition or in greater general perfection, and I am glad to find that the International Jury have shared the opinion I put forth, and have allotted two gold medals, for beer, to England, the other nations only taking one. One of these medals has been awarded to Messrs. Allsopp; the second is taken by Messrs. Bass.

Not a single distiller of whisky makes his appearance; and Messrs. Underwood and Co. would alone represent English gin, were it not for Messrs. Boord and Son, whose celebrated "Old Tom" and liqueurs are vended at the refreshment-buffet of Spiers and Pond; and Messrs. Daun and Vallentin's, whose liquors are sold by Bertram and Roberts. Messrs. Henley and Son (whose perry was much admired by the jury), divide with Messrs. Underwood the representation of vinegar, and with Mr. Fryer that of cider and perry.

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CHAPTER XI.

The Utility of Exhibitions—Completeness an Essential—Suggestions on Prizes—How they should be awarded—The Effect of the Exhibition on the Supply of Wine to England—A new Standard of Taste necessary—The legitimate Object of Wine-Drinking—Proper Time of drinking it—Wine a Necessity rather than a Luxury—Legislation on Wine—Mr. Gladstone—A Word to our Wine Merchants—Professor Liebig on Wine—Mr. Oliveira—Dr. Druitt.

I HAVE thus endeavoured, as briefly as was consistent with the nature of the matters examined, to consider the various products in Class 73. It now only remains for me to draw a few deductions from what I have seen, and to hazard a few suggestions thereupon.

The primary question suggested amounts, I apprehend, to this: Are Exhibitions of any use? and, if so, in what lies their definite and practical utility? That the first part of this question must

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meet with a very general affirmative, is obvious. The world has made up its mind that Exhibitions, either general or sectional, are of great use to civilization; but while gladly admitting the postulate, I may be allowed this reservation—that in what is called a "world's fair," *completeness* in every department is an imperative necessity. That department should not be admitted to distinctive exposition in which display was not made of the products of the leading manufacturers. Unless the most skilful and prominent representatives of a particular branch are present, it is impossible that foreigners can form an adequate idea of our proficiency, or arrive at an impartial conclusion as to our merits. As well, indeed, might we exhibit a body, without a head, as a complete representation of the human form.

With regard to prizes, I hold medals, certificates, mentions, &c., to be legitimate instruments for good. That they may occasionally subserve the purposes of trade advertisements is a matter unworthy of notice, and one with which the donor, at least, has nothing to do; but they are of great

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value as an encouragement to industry and a recognition of merit. I may observe that many judicious friends of education have deprecated the prize-system in schools, on the ground that undue emulation is thereby encouraged. Such objections do not hold with regard to trade and manufacture. There emulation cannot be too constant or too vigorous. The community is benefited in the end by increased cheapness and increased excellence.

I would suggest, however, that the better plan in granting prizes would be to award them for special rather than for general merits. Rules much more defined as they affect the conditions of reward should be laid down beforehand, and these rules should be compiled, or at least approved, by a committee of the trade whose performances are under judgment; for such a committee would know better than any strangers could do what was most sought after, what was most difficult of attainment in manufacture, and consequently most meritorious in accomplishment. For instance, adducing my own class as an example, there might be, I think, a gold medal for the cheapest

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wine; another for that which showed the greatest properties—stability, or "keeping;" a third for that possessing the finest flavour; a fourth for fulness of body; and an extraordinary medal—a jewelled or enamelled one, if that were thought expedient, for the wine combining in itself the greater number of the qualities mentioned above. These prizes might be limited to certain countries or districts, or, on the other hand, they might be thrown open to all the world. As the distribution of rewards is at present conducted, one exhibitor, we will say, obtains a gold medal for the perfection of his product, thus receiving the distinction which he deserved; *but if to another exhibitor in the same class is awarded a precisely similar recognition*, an appreciable injury must be done to the first-selected party. The distinctive value of the prizes given diminishes in a corresponding ratio to their augmentation in number, until, in the end, the first recipient becomes unpleasantly alive to the conviction that he would have been in a position as good, if not better, had no medals at all been awarded. I would wish particularly to call

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attention to this point, as a case of special hardship has come under my notice in this Exhibition, owing to the present mode of distributing rewards.

With regard to the practical utility of the Exhibition of 1867 as throwing any light on wine or the wine trade, I may point out, not for the information of the erudite, but for those who desire to learn, that it has been proved by the experience of the wine-producing countries of antiquity, that nature must always be indebted to art and to science—and that, too, in a very extensive degree—in the production of good wine; and that, however bounteous may be the yield of the soil, mere copiousness of production weighs little in the scale against skill, perseverance, and carefulness in manufacture. Exhibitions such as the present, then, enable us to ascertain with accuracy what nations have become, or are becoming, most proficient in the art of improving the gifts with which they have been endowed by Providence. We also awaken to the knowledge of new sources of supply of good, cheap, wholesome, and natural wines—priceless desiderata to a country like Eng-

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land, whose taste has been for more than a century systematically vitiated; and, as this is the age of commercial treaties, I can see no valid reason why we should not exchange vast quantities of the manufactures on which we pride ourselves for the products of countries with which we have hitherto done but little business. Finally, the results of the Exhibition of 1867 should stimulate manufacturers to greater exertion, and should place the consumer in a position to discriminate, for the future, between that which is faulty and that which is really excellent.

But how, it may be asked, are we to avail ourselves of the information thus acquired, and turn it to profitable account? This is a question of most serious moment, and demands much more extended examination than I could possibly give it here. I may state, however, broadly, that we should adopt a new standard by which to test the quality of wine. We should seek for a beverage which could be *drunk*, and not merely sipped. We should look more to the legitimate quenching of thirst, and the consequent refreshment of the

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frame, than to a refined kind of dram-drinking. We should drink our wine *with our food*, and not separately; and, did we adopt that course, I am persuaded that the liquor which appears almost acid to those accustomed to *vins de dessert* would become simply refreshing and appetising. And, finally, we should give ourselves a little more trouble about our wine. I have frequently heard it boasted that one of the chief advantages possessed by sherry over other wines was, that it rather improved than deteriorated by being left open for a few days. Such a claim to distinction I cannot consider in any way complimentary to sherry; and, without wishing to plunge into controversy, I may venture to assert that all wine worthy of being so called is deserving of and requires great care. I have no wish to take an exaggerated estimate of the merits of wine; but when insisting on the necessity for its careful treatment, I may point out that "care" taken in trifles begets care in essentials; and it is my aspiration that, in the future, wine—natural wine, which is exhilarating rather than intoxicating—should be considered an

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article of necessity rather than one of luxury, a thing for daily use rather than indulgence. As an illustration of the perceptible increase in the taste for natural wines in England, I may state that, whereas prior to 1860 the importation was only 695,913 gallons, it attained in 1866 the comparatively large quantity of 3,365,802.

Further legislation is also clearly necessary, to develop a national taste. It was by the blundering policy and one-sided treaties of our forefathers that our bad habits of drinking strong and brandied wines were fostered, and it is to the continued exertions of the late Mr. Benjamin Oliveira, seconded by some of the more enlightened wine-merchants of England, and brought to a consummation by Mr. Gladstone, when he reduced the wine duties to 1*s.* per gallon, that we owe our partial emancipation from the thraldom of "doctored" and "loaded" wines. A revolution is taking place in the national taste, and we only await the removal of a few remaining restrictions and impediments for the change from bad to good to be perfected.

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But it is not to laws only that we must look. It is an incontrovertible fact, that the tendency of modern political economy is to bring the producer and the consumer into closer proximity. Whether this be beneficial or detrimental to their mutual interests, it is not my province to determine. I simply record the fact. Looking at it merely as a fact, it surely behoves the British merchant to take care that he buys in the best markets, and thereby satisfies the consumer with whom he has now immediately to deal. I am no advocate for startling and subversive changes, and I recognise to the full the anxiety of our principal English merchants to secure the best and most genuine wines for their customers. As a rule, the public may have no tangible ground for complaint; but there are exceptions to the rule. The public are fickle, and the most sedulous care should be taken to meet their wants and to keep them in the right direction. There is an erroneous idea, very widely prevalent, that genuine and natural wines can only be purchased abroad, and this idea the foreigner takes good care to foster. For their own sakes,

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therefore, I think that the members of the English trade should put aside their false notions of "dignity," and demonstrate, by the publication of circulars, that they are alive to the change which is taking place around them, and thus vindicate our high character for energy and enterprise in commerce. It is also essential that hotel-keepers should sell their wines according to a more just and reasonable tariff than that which at present prevails. The actual scale is simply absurd; and the hotel-keeper is comparatively content with a small profit on strong and alcoholic wines, of which little can be drunk, while he levies an exorbitant tax on natural wines, of which far larger quantities would be consumed were it not for the virtual prohibition laid upon them by "fancy" names and exorbitant prices.

I should regret to conclude this Report, which has already been extended beyond the limits originally assigned to it, were I not to make some allusion, however brief, to the moral and physical desirability of drinking pure and natural wine, in lieu of fiery and intoxicating mixtures.

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It is satisfactory to know that on this head I can fortify my own opinion by the recorded language of those who, in their time, have spoken with admitted authority on the question. On the characteristics of wine compared with spirits Professor Liebig thus writes,—"Wine, as a restorative, as a means of refreshment when the powers of life are exhausted, as a means of correction and compensation where misproportion occurs in nutrition and the organism is deranged in its operation, and as a means of protection against transient organic disturbances, *wine is surpassed by no product of nature or art.*" And again, "In no part of Germany do the apothecaries' establishments bring so low a price as in the rich cities on the Rhine; for there wine is the universal medicine for the healthy as well as for the sick, and it is as milk to the aged." Of spirits Professor Liebig writes, that he who drinks them "draws, so to speak, a bill on his health, which must be always renewed because for want of means he cannot take it up. He consumes his capital, instead of his interest, and

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the result is the inevitable bankruptcy of his body."

Mr. Oliveira, too, speaking in the House of Commons on the 5th of April, 1853, said in reference to the wine trade:—"It is a question affecting the moral and sanitary interests of the bulk of the people of this great country; it has important bearings on the greatest of human blessings—the preservation of peace between the nations of the world; it has a most important bearing on the social and moral condition of the people;" and he had observed, that in countries where wine was the ordinary beverage of the people there was less intoxication and a better tone of morality among the lower classes, than existed among the corresponding classes in Great Britain.

One more quotation, and my task may be brought to a close. It is from a little work written by Dr. Druitt, entitled *Report on Cheap Wines*, and deserves, both for medical and social reasons, to be universally known. "But it is not only," remarks Dr. Druitt, "in a medical point

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of view, but as a friend of sobriety and morals, that I venture to advocate the larger use of wine —*i. e.* pure wine—as a beverage. There are large numbers of townspeople, and especially of women, engaged in sedentary occupations who cannot digest the beer which is so well suited to our outdoor labouring population. The very tea which is so grateful to their languid, pasty, flabby tongues, from its astringent and sub-acid properties, and which also comforts their miserable nerves, has this intense drawback that, when taken in excessive draughts, and without a due allowance of substantial food, it begets dyspepsia, and that worst form of it which impels the sufferer to seek a refuge in the gin-bottle. Cheap wine would cut off the temptation to gin, and, with an equal bulk of water would be found, in many cases, a happy substitute for tea. I know a great deal of the better class of needlewomen and milliners' assistants, and speak from experience.

"For purposes of social exhilaration amongst classes who are *not* outdoor labourers, beer is too coarse. Man, as a social animal, requires some-

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thing which he can sip as he sits and talks, and which pleases his palate, whilst it gives some aliment to the stomach and stimulates the flow of genial thoughts in the brain. No one who has ever made the experiment will fail to give the preference to wine over spirits, or can refuse to give a helping hand to any 'movement' that will banish spirits to their proper place, as medicines for the sick and aged, and not as beverages for the healthy. Civilized man must drink, will drink, and ought to drink; but it should be wine."

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CHAPTER XII.

Trade-Marks—Their Object—The two Mountebanks—Limited use of Brands—Their Effect on Commerce—Trade-Marks and Protection—Requisites in the Formation of a Mercantile Character—How it may be injured by Trade-Marks.

WERE the question asked, what is their object? the obvious reply would seem to be, that trade-marks are employed in order to ensure to the purchaser the genuineness of the product he is seeking, and to protect the manufacturer against the fraudulent imitator of his wares. Were these ends infallibly attained without injury to commerce, trade-marks would be cordially welcomed by all. It is extremely questionable, however, whether the objects sought are really effected. In the first place, what guarantee has the consumer that the

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product dignified by a trade-mark is of a more genuine quality than that which has none ? *

We have all heard of the two mountebanks who competed in making audible the squeaking of a pig beneath their cloaks. The squeaking of one who was an old favourite with the audience was declared to be immeasurably superior to that of his rival, notwithstanding that the defeated candidate showed them that he had really a live pig concealed under his garment, whereas the successful squeaker was merely a skilful ventriloquist. Thus I am persuaded, that most persons of business pursuits could of their own experience furnish numerous instances of inferior goods realizing considerably

* It is generally supposed that brandy—above all things, if bottled at Cognac—is quite above suspicion, and yet I am compelled to dispel that fond illusion, for I fear there is but little received in England which has not been, like most other beverages, "prepared," or in other words sweetened, or doctored, to suit the English "taste." Poor English taste! the term becomes in view of our ravenous craving for potent drinks, a mere mockery of nomenclature. That I am not singular in my estimate of the Cognac shipped to England, I may mention that in the Paris Exhibition the French themselves declined altogether to consider some samples of what we should call very good brandy, simply because they had been "prepared," or sweetened for exportation.

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higher prices than others of better quality and greater intrinsic value, solely because the former enjoyed the factitious decoration of a trade-mark.

Let me explain that I do not object to the employment of trade-marks to a reasonably limited extent, but I do not hold it to be good or sound policy to lend all the powers of stringent laws and penal inflictions to what must, in the end, lessen the impulse of that commercial enterprise which it is the interest of all to encourage. Merchants, no matter whether they be wholesale or retail, if they desire to obtain the patronage of the public for *unprotected* merchandise, must in the first instance show that they deserve success by thoroughly mastering the details of their business, by diligently going forth in search of the best markets, and by relaxing no possible effort to earn a character for intelligence, fair-dealing, and integrity. Such exertions, however, cease to be of primary necessity when the merchant's stock is entirely of a *trade-marked* description. Such a fact destroys the very germs of enterprise, and narrows, instead of enlarging, the field of compe-

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tition. The struggle becomes one of unscrupulous underselling, instead of an earnest and just contest of emulation, as to who, by his own industry and capacity, shall succeed in dispensing an article which is not only the cheapest, but the best.*

Regarding the question simply as one of national commercial economy, I am convinced that, did wine-merchants study their business as it deserves to be studied, it would be the means of retaining in this country, for remunerative investment, many thousands of pounds which are now virtually lost abroad, through our ignorance and indifference. Trade-marks owe their most powerful support to this want of knowledge. The public have come to mistrust their own judgment, and, reposing blind confidence on those who profess to take an onerous responsibility off their shoulders, they become the willing slaves of a host of extraordinary devices.

I have used the term "protected," with reference to trade-marks advisedly, because I hold trade-marked goods to be to those destitute of such a

* The *merchant*, in fact, is resolved into a *patent agent*.

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distinction as Protection is to Free Trade; and because I fancy I discern in their general adoption a reactionary tendency towards protectionist doctrines, or, in other words, towards monopoly, which must in all cases be eminently detrimental to the consumer. The manufacturer himself must allow that the final result of protection in all trades is depression and stagnation of energy. I admit that now, as in the old days of protection, there are some noble exceptions to this rule—men whose energies are only the more quickened by the success they have achieved in business, who disdain to rely on their trade-marks rather than on their own industry and ability,—still the rule exists, and is undeniably injurious to general progress, and it must ever be rules, and not exceptions, that most intimately concern the public. For my own part I candidly own, that I do not consider trade-marks on manufactures, taken as a whole, to be beneficial either to the producer or the consumer.

Lastly, it is expedient to inquire how immediate commerce is affected by trade-marks. If, in the new era, we are to recognize only two classes,

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those who produce and those who consume, these reflections will be useless, but as some time, I trust, is to be allowed to merchants to put their houses in order ere they definitively retire from the contest, it is as well to ask what is their present standing in the strife. What are the chief requisites in the formation of the mercantile character? Are they not a thorough and intimate knowledge of business, a high sense of honour, and an earnest desire to gain a good name? And is it not the interest of us all to encourage such a race of traders? Where, however, is the scope for mercantile action to be found? and how can a merchant exemplify the characteristics I have named, if his duties are confined to selling merely that which is branded and ticketed with its price? And where is his stimulus to build up a brilliant reputation, if the results of his endeavours are only to enrich some person, probably personally unknown to him? It is not, I repeat, because I object on the whole to the employment of trade-marks that I am so short-sighted as to ignore their usefulness to a certain extent, but I do

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most earnestly deprecate violent extremes of any kind; and I protest, on the one hand against the prevalent plan of possessors of well-known brands attempting to push themselves over and through the ranks of those who helped them to establish their names; while on the other I am constrained to think that but a poor spirit is exhibited by those merchants who, in their anxiety to make money, care little about making reputation, and who sell certain brands, or trade-marks, not because in their judgment they are any better than others, but because by using them they can "steal a march," so to speak, on their fellow traders. In such conduct as much ignorance as cupidity is shown, for the instruments they employ, instead of growing up to be their pride and support, while they prove at the best but a sorry aid, are at any time liable to be snatched from them by some one more rapacious than, and as ignorant as themselves. The foregoing reflections have naturally brought me to another topic intimately connected with the general theme, and I propose to say a few words concerning it in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER XIII.

The old and new Style of Wine-Merchant—Why there should be two Classes—How it is they differ—Profits of the Trade—Errors regarding them—The fallibility of Advertised Prices—An Illustration—Nonsense better than Sense—Purity more essential than Cheapness—The probable Future of the Wine Trade.

I SUPPOSE there is no branch of commerce conducted on the same principles as those which govern the wine trade; and one of the chief reasons for this is perhaps that wine has hitherto been regarded as a luxury, rather than as a necessary of life. It is my hope and belief that a great change in public opinion is taking place in this respect, and that reform will develop into a pacific and beneficial revolution. For this to be effected, however, it is essential that, with the change in the character of the article itself, there

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should be a corresponding alteration in the mode of selling and in the character of the vendor; and those who are inclined to blame Mr. Gladstone for revising the excise laws, and permitting grocers and others to sell wine, should rather blame themselves for not perceiving the inevitable consequences of such a change: as, had they done so, they might have secured a portion of that colossal trade, now almost the monopoly of one house, which had not only the wit to see their opportunity, but also the courage and energy to seize it.

There are, fortunately, admirers of both eras or schools of wine-selling—of the new and old-fashioned trader—and it is, perhaps, for the advantage of the public that both should continue to flourish. Let us see in what they differ from one another. The old-fashioned wine-merchant, as described by the more modern aspirant to fame, "Is unduly greedy of profit. He does not furnish a list of prices, and so nobody knows what he has to sell, or how much he intends to charge. He is not exactly the same as other *merchants*, because he does not actually sell by retail, and yet

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he would resent the imputation of being a tradesman," nor, as a rule, should he be so classified. This, or something like this, is the opinion of the new wine-merchant with respect to his old-fashioned *confrère*. Let us hear, now, what the senior has to say of the juvenile, with his "this" or his "that" wine at "42*s*., usually sold at 60*s*." To tell the truth, the old despises the new man, and thinks that he is lowering the standard of the trade, and debasing the status of the trader in every sense. He accuses the modern merchant of putting wine on the same footing as pickles, marmalade, or candles. He sneers at his continual advertisements and prices current. He declares that the quotations of prices are so multiplied that the public become weary of the very name of wine, and that thereby the entire trade is damaged and vulgarized. And yet when I look upon this controversy simply as one of the public, I recognize that benefit accrues to us from both schools. It is erroneous to suppose that the old wine-merchant realizes any very extraordinary profits, in view of the capital invested in his business;

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in fact, I am not aware of any trade in which results so modest are realized; for, instead of netting two, if not three bonuses per annum, the wine-merchant of old and good standing cannot reckon on securing a profit more than once in three years on an average, if indeed so frequently. No one, I think, would consider 10 per cent. too high a rate of gross profit; and even supposing that, like one of the new school (who do not keep their wines until they have reached maturity), he turned his capital over, say three times a year, such a course would give him 90 per cent. Does any one believe he gets such a profit? It is, I repeat, to the interest of the public that both the old and new school should continue; but I do not see the probability of the former keeping its ground if, on the one hand, the public persist in the foolish expectation of obtaining fine and natural wines at ridiculously low prices; and, on the other, the old wine-merchant has the mortification to see his young competitor not merely pocketing a large income, but at the same time gaining great popularity.

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Turning once again to the modern school, we see a pregnant example of the evil working of trade-marks or brands; and how by their means a wine-merchant, even though advancing his pecuniary interests, may debase his vocation by pandering to the ignorance of the public, whilst ostensibly appealing to its taste and intelligence.

We will assume, for example, that A. is a well-known shipper of champagne; thereupon his name appears, as a matter of course, on the price-list of a newly-established wine-merchant, and his products are quoted at a price considerably less than that at which they are usually sold. The merchant, however, omits to state, and the public are not aware that they ought to ask, how long the "well-known" wine has been landed in England,—a most important question indeed! and one which materially affects the value of the wine: neither does he say that the price at which he quotes this particular brand bears (most probably) a far lower rate of profit than those of other shippers; in fact, that it is employed simply

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as a "decoy duck," whereby a too confiding and too easily "tickled" public are led to infer that all the wines sold by him are comparatively quite as cheap. But not only are the public thus deceived, the shipper himself is also seriously injured; for in an article so dependent on what is termed "taste" as champagne, it is most important for the manufacturer to keep in the first rank as regards prices: so much so is this the case, that I could name an instance in which a champagne house, being very desirous to obtain a high reputation in this country, offered to accept less than their ordinary price, provided the merchant would quote it as the very highest in his list. Like Sheridan, they were wise in their generation. They were content to take the nonsense against the sense of the country.

There can be no doubt that the wine trade is at present in a transition state. What it may ultimately become I do not profess to determine; but I feel assured that, with the exception of a certain number whose prosperity is, as it were, guaranteed by the exigent refinement of a wealthy and luxu-

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rious section of the community, and by whom the trade in wine will always be regarded as a matter of luxury and high art, as well as a necessary of life, it would be far wiser for the traders in wine who remain to combine to become *bonâ fide merchants*, ready and willing to supply retail shops; while others, who are now struggling for little more than a bare livelihood, would do well to take a leaf out of the objectionable grocer's book; and if they did not sell wine with jams and pickles, try to sell it without, in an open and unmistakeable shop. Divided into these three classes, there would be little room for those objectionable addenda to the present system which, in the shape of bankrupts, swindlers, and persons unable to get a living elsewhere, have often made "going into the wine trade" a term almost equivalent to "going on the turf."

To some of the public it may appear a matter of indifference as to how manufacturers and merchants conduct their business, so long as they can buy their wine cheap. To my mind, however, it is quite as important that the channel of supply

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should be pure as well as cheap. The last is a desirable ingredient. The first is an actual necessity; and had I to give an answer to the oft-made inquiry, "Where can I get good wine?" I would say go to a wine-merchant of good character.

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CHAPTER XIV.

The Duties on Wine—The Question of their Equalization—The Alcoholic Test—Should the Standard be altered—Bright Hopes in the Future.

ALTHOUGH this may not be a subject altogether of public interest, a few remarks on the fiscal aspect of the wine trade may not, at the present moment, be inopportune.

All those who are connected with the wine trade are aware, that there now virtually exist only two rates of duty; viz., of 1*s.* per gallon on wine which contains not more than 26° of alcohol, and of 2*s.* 6*d.* on that containing from 26° to 42°. To speak more plainly, port, sherry, and marsala pay 2*s.* 6*d.*; whilst claret, Burgundy, and other light wines are only charged 1*s.* By some this arrangement has been denounced as unfair,

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and these would reduce all duties to the same level. I question, however, if the demands of justice would be met by such a measure.

Putting on one side all reference to revenue, for I discard all idea that it could possibly suffer from the private distillation of even the commonest wine, it may still be asked, why it is that wine is taxed in the present manner? If it be taxed simply as a luxury, the logical inference would be that all wines should bear an equal burden. Was there a different rate at first in favour of the light wines, in order to encourage their consumption? I would not, if that were the case, have such favouritism continue; it amounts to protection, and never has any trade thriven so well under protection as without it, and I would fain have it thrive. But if, as is possible, it was the intention of those who revised the customs-laws to tax, not simply the wine itself, but the amount of spirit contained therein, I would certainly let the differential duties remain; and I would reply to those who are agitating for a change,—"We do not prefer charging a diversity of duties, we would rather for

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many reasons there were but one; we were informed that good, pure, natural wine should only contain a certain proportion of alcohol, and on those considerations the duties were adjusted. The remedy is in your own hands. It is you, and not the laws, who are the cause of differential duties. We do not say that wine, properly so called, shall of necessity contain a specified quantity of alcohol, we merely limit its extent; and were we not to do so, how could we in justice refuse admission to any wine, no matter what its strength, provided the growers, or importers of it, assured us of its genuineness? And we contend, that the arrangement whereby wines of a more alcoholized nature than our standard can be entered for consumption, on payment of a somewhat higher rate of duty, deserves to be viewed rather as a facility than an obstacle to commerce."

Whether the alcoholic limit at present fixed is the best, or whether it might not with advantage be slightly extended, is, I think, a fair subject for inquiry; but I do trust the extension may be only

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a slight one, for I have every reason to hope that ere long all the great wine countries will find means to prepare their wines to suit our duties, whereas if we consented to alter our tariff to meet the necessity of the present and unscientific mode of preparation, we must, I fear, bid farewell to all hopes of improvement in taste and habits such as many of us have so long and anxiously looked for.

It has been argued in some quarters that, granting the test of alcoholic strength to be a fair one in fixing the rate of duty, port, sherry, and other similar wines are, when contrasted with claret, very unfairly taxed. But is this the case? Although the limit for the 1*s.* duty is 26° the light wines rarely exceed 18°; and if that be compared with strong wine at 42°, which pays 2*s.* 6*d.*, we find, first, that claret pays at the rate of 5*s.* per gallon for the spirit it contains, while the stronger kind only yields 6*s.* to the revenue; and although I am not privileged to know by what rules the framers of the Act which regulates the duties at present levied were guided, I am inclined to think that they did not disregard the

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calculation that the nearer wine approached in strength to pure alcohol, the higher should be the RATE of duty placed upon it: more especially if that strength were in some measure due to the addition of brandy, which, when it enters this country unmixed with wine, pays the highest of all spirit, viz., 10*s*. 5*d*. per gallon.

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CHAPTER XV.

Wine in its Physiological Aspect—An appeal to the Medical Profession—Why we drink Wine—Fully and partially fermented Wines—Their different Effects on the Human Frame—Wine a Stimulus *to* Nutrition rather than a Material *of* Nutrition—An Ideal Wine.

IMPERFECT as these "Practical Notes on Wine" may be, they would be still more incomplete did they not contain some reference, however brief, to the effects produced on the human frame by fermented beverages; but feeling that with all the interest the subject may possess, I am treading, as a non-medical man, on ground which is alike difficult, delicate, and dangerous, I shall frame my remarks rather in the spirit of suggestion than in one of dogmatism, in the hope that other members of the medical profession, besides Dr. Druitt, may be led to the examination of this most important topic

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in its scientific bearings, for the sake, not only of the public generally, but of medical men themselves, whose opinions, whether well or ill-founded, must always have great power in influencing the national taste. It may be asked, in the first place, why we drink wine at all; and I opine I am giving a vaguely general answer when I reply that we drink it because it is agreeable to us, and because, in moderation, it refreshes the body and exhilarates the spirits.

With such a general impression, and with a persuasion that excess in wine, as in anything else, is detrimental to health, the majority of mankind might do well to be content; for we should be in a miserable condition indeed if we entered into minute and complicated calculations of the properties of everything we eat or drink, and of the precise proportions of influence thereby exerted on our frames; but as among wines there are many candidates for our favour, I think it not altogether unadvisable that we should know something of their relative characteristics, to enable us,

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as in the case with our edibles, to select those which are best suited for our requirements.

In cases of actual illness, the most trifling difference in the age and in the locality of production of wine may be of serious import; but it is not within the province of this work to enter upon these graver questions. For the general public it will suffice, I think, if we divide our supplies into two classes, viz., *fully* and *partially* fermented wines. By fully fermented I mean those which contain only their own natural spirit, and which have been permitted to go through all their fermentations; while the others, although not so imperfectly fermented as some imagine, are, by the addition of brandy, prevented from undergoing a second fermentation. Let us endeavour to ascertain the differences caused by these processes. According to the doctrines laid down by some, the difference is as startling as that which exists between nectar and poison, and in advocating the claims of what are termed "natural wines," they can hardly find terms strong enough

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wherewith to denounce the beverages in which our fathers indulged. In all this there is at once injustice and impolicy. For in what does the real difference consist? It consists in this, that there is, in the first place, an additional quantity of alcohol in the partially fermented wine; and, further, that there is retained in it a certain amount of sugar, which no longer exists in the fully fermented article. At first sight, this would appear to be but of very trifling moment, for apparently the addition of a little water would neutralize the difference; but I am bound to admit that it is not so easily rectified, for chemistry tells us that the presence, in any quantity, of saccharine and alcoholic matter is more serious than is apparent, the sugar being apt to turn acid in the system, whilst the brandy prevents it from escaping through the skin and other parts of the human economy as easily as it otherwise might do. The result is a tendency, on the part of the captive matter, to solidify in the blood, and so produce gout and other kindred ailments.

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If this hypothesis be correct, I cannot too earnestly wish "God speed" to those who are striving against prejudice and deep-rooted habits, and are unceasing in their endeavours to supply us with pure and fully fermented wines. There can be no doubt, I take it, that wine acts more as a stimulus *to* nutrition than as a material *of* nutrition; and since the usages of society and our own inclination induce a larger individual consumption than is perhaps necessary, it becomes a matter of imperative importance that what we drink, if it does not contain much that is actually beneficial, should, at any rate, be as free as possible from that which is actually noxious.

My own opinion has always been that, for general use in this cold and humid country, a powerful and generous wine is necessary, provided that its strength be natural, and that it has been properly fermented. We require a wine which, when taken alone, will act as a cordial and a restorative, and which, when mixed with water, will form a pleasing and refreshing

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beverage; and I have sufficient faith in the energy and intelligence of my countrymen abroad to believe that these desiderata will, ere long, be obtained.

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CONCLUSION.

LET me in conclusion apologise to the reader, if in any of the arguments or considerations I have adduced, I may have been thought to have assumed anything approaching a dictatorial or authoritative tone. I have sedulously endeavoured to avoid the assumption of the office of a preacher or a moralist, for it is as far from my ability as it is foreign to my intention to arrogate to myself either the first or the last named function.

It has been said that the easiest way to an Englishman's heart is through his stomach. Without endorsing or repudiating this doctrine, I do very seriously think that the moral status of a nation is materially influenced by its physical amusements and indulgences, and that these are generally found to be in accordance with its

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tastes, and its standard of mental development. Actuated by this belief, I have very timorously ventured from time to time to interpolate amidst technical information a few hints as to how possibly the taste of the people of England might not altogether be bereft of benefit by a more careful attention to our beverages, and by conscientious attempts to give the public something better to drink than that to which they have been hitherto accustomed. Any more decisive expression of opinion on my part would have been alike useless and impertinent.

In the firm hope that I shall live to see the day when it shall be practicable among all classes of my countrymen to obtain a glass of pure and sound wine—whether it be used as a gentle stimulus to health, as a promoter of innocent cheerfulness on the very few occasions when in this busy country we can enjoy relaxation, or lastly, as a restorative and an anodyne in sickness, and a comfort and support in old age—I lay down my pen and bid the reader farewell.

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APPENDIX.

THREE conditions which must be observed by the consumer who desires to drink his wine in perfection :—

1st. The wine-cellar must be of a temperate heat, between 50° and 60° Fahrenheit; and should it be necessary to employ more than one place for storage, the coldest should be selected for sparkling wines, the next for the wines of France, Germany, Italy, &c., and the warmest for port, sherry, and other similar descriptions.

2nd. *All* wines, high-priced and ordinary alike, must be decanted before they are taken from the cellar for consumption; no matter from what country, nor of what colour they may be. They all deposit more or less lees, and to cause those lees to pass through the wine again, as is most effectually accomplished in the act of passing the bottle round the table, is to undo, in the course of

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a few minutes, whatever improvement it may have taken perhaps years to effect. All *fine* wines ought also to be decanted two or three hours before consumption; the difference between good and inferior wine is not nearly so apparent at the moment of decanting as is exhibited after a limited contact with the atmosphere.

3rd. The wine-glass should be light, large, and slight in texture; in fact, it should resemble, as Cyrus Redding suggests, "a soap-bubble divided in two," but leaving the larger portion for use. It is quite unnecessary, nay, it is a great mistake, to fill a glass with wine; and, therefore, the economical feature, which I fancy enters strongly into the construction of the modern wine-glass, to the entire detriment of conformity of purpose, can be still indulged in by a timely and not quite unnecessary instruction to the officiating domestic.

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